

# MINUTES.

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BELLVILLE CHURCH, CONECUH COUNTY, ALA., }  
September 25, 1839 }

## THE BETHLEHEM BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

met pursuant to adjournment. The Introductory Sermon was preached by Elder A. Jay, from Luke 13th chapter, 29th verse: "And they shall come from the East, &c."

After a recess of an hour, the delegates assembled in the church, and the Association was called to order by Elder A. Jay, Moderator; prayer by Elder J. E. Bell, and the Association was declared, by the Moderator, ready for the transaction of business.

Elder W. G. Curry, J. W. Leslie, and A. J. Robinson, were appointed to read the letters.

On motion, Damascus Church be placed on the roll of the Association, she having been dropped, and her messengers present their letter to be read with the others.

Letters read and contents noted, and the names of the messengers enrolled. (See Tabular Statement.)

On motion, the messengers from Scotland Church be entitled to their seats, and to furnish the Clerk with the statistics of the church—their Church Letter not being present.

Proceeded to the election of the officers of the Association, which resulted in the re-election of Elder A. Jay, Moderator, John DeLoach, Clerk, and A. J. Robinson, Treasurer.

The Moderator appointed the Committee on Preaching, to wit: Elder John McWilliams, J. H. Daily, E. H. J. Mobley, Lazarus Carter, and the Deacons of Bellville Church.

Petitionary letters for membership were called for, and letters from the following churches were presented, to-wit: Sardis, Mar's Hill, and Cedar Grove, which were, on motion, received into the membership of this body, and the right hand of fellowship extended to their messengers.

Letters and Messengers from corresponding bodies, were called for. From Pine Barren Association, Letter and package of Minutes, also, her messengers, Elders C. F. Sturgis, Joel E. Duke, and J. R. Hawthorne, were received and invited to seats with us.

From the Alabama Association, no letter or minutes; but received as messengers from that body, Elders J. E. Bell

and E. B. Hardee, who were invited to seats with us.

APPOINTED STANDING COMMITTEES.

On State of Religion—Elder Z. Williams, G. W. Kierce, E. Cline, M. J. Weston, Dixon Hestle, and J. W. Leslie.

On Domestic Missions—Elder G. W. Kierce, J. J. Jackson, J. T. McDonald, John Ward, J. E. McIver, and G. B. Ray.

On Queries and Requests—Elder W. G. Curry, W. C. Morrow, Jessee Thames, T. R. Pope, J. H. Daily, and A. J. Robinson.

On Sabbath Schools—J. W. Leslie, Wm. W. Graves, Ingram Spence, W. T. Nettles, and S. W. Cooke.

On Correspondence—Dixon Hestle, J. E. McIver, Y. M. Rabb, Alfred Thomas, Henry Gully, and Eld. W. G. Curry.

On Finance—A. J. Robinson, T. A. Robbins, and William Helton.

On motion, appointed a special committee, "On Ministerial Education," to wit: Elder W. G. Curry, John DeLoach, and William Graves, and, on motion, the Moderator was added to the committee.

On motion of A. J. Robinson, that a special committee of three be appointed, who are not members, "On Ministerial Support," and to report to this body, to-wit:

A. J. Robinson, J. W. Leslie, and W. T. Nettles.

On motion of W. T. Nettles, a committee be appointed to re-district the association, to-wit: W. T. Nettles, Elder J. McWilliams, and J. Thames.

On motion, the letter of Olive Branch Church was read, statistics noted, and the names of her messengers enrolled.

Report of Committee on Preaching—On Sabbath, at 11 o'clock, a. m., Elder E. B. Hardee, followed by Elder G. W. Kierce; at 2 o'clock, p. m., Elder C. F. Sturgiss, followed by Elder J. E. Bell.

Adjourned till Monday morning, at 9 o'clock. Prayer by Elder John McWilliams.

On Sabbath, the ministers preached in the order of their appointment to a large and attentive audience; at the close of the forenoon services, a collection was taken up for associational purposes, amounting to \$28 40.

MONDAY MORNING, September 27, 1869.

The association met, pursuant to adjournment. Prayer by Elder C. F. Sturgiss.

On motion, the letter from New Hope church was received, contents noted, and the name of her messenger enrolled.

Petitionary letter from Point Pleasant church was

presented, and, on motion, was received into the membership of this body, and the right hand of fellowship extended to her Delegates.

Letter, preamble and resolutions from the Evergreen church, read, statistics noted, and names of her messengers enrolled; and, on motion of Elder W. C. Morrow, the Preamble and Resolution from the Evergreen church be referred to the committee on Queries and Requests.

The committee on Sabbath Schools through their chairman made their report, which, on motion, was received and adopted. (appendix A.)

On motion of Elder W. C. Morrow, that the pastors of each church be requested to preach a sermon on Sabbath Schools, at their churches by the 1st of January next.

The special committee, on Ministerial Education, through their chairman, made their report, which was received and adopted. (appendix B.)

The committee on State of Religion, through their chairman, made their report, which was received, and, on motion, the report was re-committed back to the committee, to which, Elder W. C. Morrow, was added.

The committee on Queries and Requests, through their chairman, made their report, which, on motion, was received and adopted. (appendix C.)

The committee on Re-Districting the Association, through their chairman, made their report, which was received, and on motion, adopted. (appendix D.)

On motion, adjourned to Tuesday morning, at 9 o'clock. Prayer by Elder Z. Williams.

TUESDAY MORNING, September 28, 1869.

The association met, pursuant to adjournment. Prayer by Elder W. G. Curry. The minutes of the preceding day read, corrected, and adopted.

The committee on Finance, through their chairman, made report, which was received and adopted. (appendix E.)

The committee on Ministerial Support, through their chairman, made their report, which on motion was received and adopted. (appendix F.)

The committee on Domestic Missions, through their chairman, made their report, which was received and adopted. (appendix G.)

The committee on Correspondence, through their chairman, made their report, which was received and adopted.

(appendix H.)

## APPOINTED CORRESPONDENCE.

To Pine Barren Association—J. W. Leslie, J. H. Lee, W. T. Nettles, M. J. Weston, T. R. Pope, Dixon Hestle, Elder A. Jay, John McWilliams, and T. A. Robbins.

Alabama Association—Elder P. S. Milner, W. W. Graves.

Zion Association—Elders J. Thames, J. E. McIver, A. J. Robinson, G. W. Kierce, and A. Jay.

State Convention—Elders A. Jay, W. C. Morrow and A. J. Robinson.

On motion the next session of this body be held with the Beulah Church, Conecuh County, and Elder John McWilliams to preach the Introductory Sermon, and Elder W. C. Morrow, alternate.

On motion of Elder W. C. Morrow the collection taken up on Sabbath be sent to the State Convention to be applied to Home Missions, amounting to \$28 40, also, the following amounts from

J W Leslie	\$5 00	W T Nettles	\$5 00
W W Graves	1 00	M J Weston	1 00
Mrs E B Hardee	2 00	Dixon Hestle	1 00
T J Carter	1 00	Jacob Smith	50
T R Pope	90	J A McDonald	1 00
J Jarnegan	1 00	Mrs N Farnham	5 00
John Andress	25	J H Lee	50
Miss Sallie Leslie	2 00	Mrs T A Robbins	1 00
Mrs M A Ivey	50	Mrs James Straughn	2 50
James Straughn	2 50		

amounting to \$23 65 be sent to the State Convention for Home Missions, amounting in all to \$65 05.

On motion of D Hestle that the sum of sixty dollars be appropriated to the printing of the minutes and the balance of the minute fund be allowed the clerk for superintending the printing and distributing the minutes.

On motion of Brother DeLoach the following resolution was adopted, That in order to carry out the suggestion in the report of the committee on Ministerial Education:

*Resolved*, That this association appoint a committee of one or more in each district within the bounds of this association, to solicit money by subscription or in any way

that may be thought proper to raise such a sum as can be had, to be applied by this body to the education of ministers.

The committee appointed under the resolution in the First District—J W Leslie, T R Pope, John DeLoach, W T Nettles, R J Lambert, T J Carter, Eld. A J Lambert.

Second District—James Straughn, Henry Gulley, J A. McDavid, John Beck and R Otis.

Third District—Elder A Jay, A J Robinson, W W Graves and W C Morrow; and on motion, the same to be styled a "Finance and Executive Committee," and to dispose of the funds so raised as may be thought proper.

On motion, Elder G W Keirce was elected a missionary to labor in the field of our Domestic Mission.

On motion, the Finance & Executive committee on Ministerial Education, raise all the funds they can to aid and support our missionary, and to forward the same monthly to Elder A Jay, the chairman of the committee.

On motion of Elder W C Morrow, that Elder G W Keirce be instructed to collect such sum as can be raised within the bounds of his labors, to aid and support our Domestic Missionary.

The committee on State of Religion, through their chairman, made their report; which was received and adopted. (Appendix I.)

The Treasurer made his report; which was received and adopted. (Appendix K.)

On motion, adjourned; a hymn was sung, and the parting hand extended; prayer by Elder W C Morrow, and the Association, after a harmonious session, adjourned to meet with the Beulah Church, Conecuh County, on Saturday before the Fourth Sabbath of September, 1870.

A. JAY, Moderator,

JOHN DELOACH, Clerk.

## ON SABBATH SCHOOLS—APPENDIX (A.)

It is with a feeling of deep regret that your committee have discovered but little encouraging from the letters of the churches of our Association upon the all important subject of Sabbath Schools. At the different sessions of this association, the importance and necessity of the Sabbath School enterprise has been urged upon the churches by the different committees appointed for that purpose with all the earnestness and zeal of men who felt its importance, and were fully alive to the imperative necessity of beginning this work at once in every *Baptist* church composing our Association. But to all human appearances their efforts have not accomplished the end intended, and have failed to elicit from the churches that zeal and interest its importance demanded. What more to say, or what other argument to use that has not already been made to arouse the churches to a proper discharge of this christian duty, your committee are at a loss to state. To report here all the arguments that might be used in favor of an efficient sabbath school in every church and community throughout the bounds of this association would be a useless consumption of time; for we believe that all intelligent christians of every denomination have long since admitted the fact—that the sabbath school is one of the greatest and most invaluable auxiliaries to true piety that we have, that it is the proper nursery of the church and the stepping-stone to true christian usefulness. Where is the church in all the history of our denomination, that having gone into this glorious work aright in the active and proper use of such means as God had placed in its power, that ever regretted the step they took? Where is the parent, who having placed his or her child under the hallowed influences of a sabbath school instead of permitting it to desecrate God's holy day by all manner of wickedness, that can say that they are sorry for what they have done? The question then is not whether we ought to

have a sabbath school ; but whether we will ? In regard to this point your committee are satisfied that all difficulties may be removed by a persevering and determined effort on the part of the members of the several churches. The experience of other churches and associations of our order, fully and clearly demonstrate this fact. It is also a noteworthy fact that those churches and associations which have maintained prosperous sabbath schools, are more frequently blessed with gracious out-pourings of the Holy Spirit, and the work of Grace has almost universally commenced among the Sabbath school scholars. Is there any stronger evidence wanted of their efficiency, than this ? Let us then as Churches, let us as an Association redouble our efforts to begin and carry on this great work. Let us procure exclusively Baptist literature, and commence at once the work we have too long neglected, and pray God's blessing upon us in order that our children may be properly instructed in Baptist doctrines, which we ourselves profess to believe are the doctrines of the New Testament. Without saying more your committee ask the adoption of the following resolutions:

*Resolved* 1st.—That we, the members of this body will redouble our energies to carry forward this work, that we will endeavor to enlist the sympathies and energies of all our Brethren and Sisters in behalf of this object.

*Resolved* 2nd.—That we cordially co-operate with the Sabbath School Boards of our denomination, and that we will assist in the circulation of Sabbath School papers published at the South. JOHN W. LESLIE, Chairman.

## ON MINISTERIAL EDUCATION. (B.)

Your committee to whom was referred the subject of Ministerial Education, would respectfully submit the following report :

We regard the education of the Ministry as being of the most inconceivable importance, and demands the serious consideration of your body. It is proper that the man who teaches others should be taught himself, and if he is not regarded as competent to teach, his influence for good is more or less paralyzed. This country was never more aroused on the subject of Education than now, and it is evident that in the course of a few years it will present quite a different aspect in point of intelligence. The Ministry, therefore, to be successful and accomplish its mission must keep pace with the intelligence of the country. Other denominations are becoming aroused on this important subject and are putting forth extraordinary efforts for the education of their ministry. Hence the necessity that the Baptists should be fully awake to their duty and see that their Ministry shall be prepared to compete successfully with that of other denominations. Whilst we as a people feel it a duty to issue what is called a Confession of Faith, as a convenient synopsis of our doctrines and principles; yet it is to be distinctly understood that the Bible alone is the Book final of appeals among us. To be able then to ascertain and clearly set forth the teachings of the blessed book of God, is more important to Baptists than to any other people. How, then, can there be any difference of opinion among us in regard to the subject of Ministerial Education? Your committee feel confident that there is none. There can be none! The manner in which this great work is to be accomplished remains to be investigated. Your committee feel confident that there are young men scattered among our churches whose minds are more or less impressed with the important work of the Gospel Ministry; and do most earnestly recommend that these young gifts be sought out and encouraged and assisted by all the means that God has placed within our hands, and to this end, we most earnestly recommend that an opportunity be given for brethren to give pledges payable on or before the next meeting of this body, to aid any young brother who may be looking to the work of the ministry. Respectfully submitted,

W. G. CURRY, Chairman.



## ON QUERIES AND REQUESTS. (C.)

Your committee under this head have nothing upon which to report, except that Brother S. C. Johnson has been excluded from the fellowship of Evergreen Church and his credentials taken from him. Since that time, he has applied for restoration and is now restored to its fellowship; but his license to preach has been with-held.

Respectfully submitted

W. G. CURRY, Chairman.

## ON RE-DISTRICTING CHURCHES. (D.)

The Committee to whom was refered the re-districting the Churches' of this Association, beg leave to report that they have performed the duties assigned them and report as follows. (See their order in Tabular statement.) All of which is Respectfully submitted.

W. T. NETTLES, Chairman.

FINANCE REPORT.—AMOUNT RECEIVED—(E)

CHURCHES.	minutes.	CHURCHES.	minutes.
Evergreen	\$4 50	Milton	\$2 00
Philadelphia	2 30	New Prospect	2 00
Pleasant Ridge	1 50	Brooklin	3 00
Pilgrim's Rest	1 00	Sepulga	2 70
Claiborne	4 00	Elim	1 50
Salem	5 00	Pleasant Hill	1 70
Zion	3 50	Old Town	3 55
Monroeville	5 00	Pine Barren	1 50
Bethany	2 00	Coon Hill	2 25
Bellville	5 25	Cedar Creek	1 00
Beulah	3 00	Mt. Carmel	1 50
Arkadelphia	3 00	Scotland	2 50
Catawba Springs	1 50	Antioch	2 10
Olive Branch	2 60	Mar's Hill	1 50
Georgiana	1 50	Cedar Grove	1 00
New Hope	2 00	Point Pleasant	1 50
Union	1 25	Damascus	2 50
Brushy Creek	2 00	Sardis	2 00
			<hr/>
Total			\$86 75
Sabbath collection			28 40
Contribution for Home Mission			33 65
Amount from Brother Burt			3 00
			<hr/>
			\$151 80

Respectfully submitted

A. J. ROBINSON, Chairman.

## ON MINISTERIAL SUPPORT. (F.)

Your committee have carefully considered the subject of Ministerial Support, and find it so unmistakably ordained that they that preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel, and think it un-necessary to extend this report by urging the importance of heeding the command: "muzzle not the ox that treadeth out the corn;" but would recommend to the churches of this association, as perhaps, at present, the surest way to secure to the laborer his reward and to the churches efficient pastors, the following plan, to wit:

Let two or more churches call, or having called the same minister to preach for them, have a meeting through their Deacons or other appointed agents, and agree upon what would be a liberal compensation for the services rendered or to be rendered by him, and what proportion of the sum so agreed on each church ought to pay, and we would urge upon each church, a party to such an arrangement, the duty and necessity of adopting at once some measures by which they can promptly raise their proportionate share of the stipulated sum, and to the members of all the churches, whether co-operating with others or not, we would say: Brethren, do not forget the command, to give as the Lord has prospered you; and the Savior has said: "If you love me, ye will keep my commandments."

As a good plan we would suggest that the Deacons circulate and present to every man, woman and child, on or about the First of January of each year, for ministerial support and other objects, and press the necessity of subscribing to the extent of ability. We have thought it might not be amiss to remind the brethren that they may render great help to ministering brethren who have no library or means of procuring books, by loaning or giving them such suitable books as they may have.

Respectfully submitted

A. J. BOBINSON, Chairman.

## ON DOMESTIC MISSIONS. (G.)

Your committee on Domestic Missions beg leave to report :

That Elder C. L. Thornton, in the place of Elder A. Jay, and Elder P. S. Milner labored in your destitute bounds during the months of May and June, and the encouragements received by them and the situation of the field as described by Elder G. W. Kierce, who also has traveled recently a good portion of it, for as we come to the following conclusion that something ought to be and can be done, we therefore recommend that this body immediately enter upon some measures whereby said work can most effectually be done. All of which is respectfully submitted.

G. W. KIERCE, Chairman.

## ON CORRESPONDENCE (H.)

The Bethlehem Bapstist Association to Corresponding Associations sendeth Christian salutation :

With pleasure we hail another annual session of our body yet we regret that we have met so few messengers, from corresponding bodies. We desire a continuance of correspondence. We have had some precious revivals in many of our Churches, while in others there is coldness and complaint of great destitution. May the Lord bless and aid you in all your efforts to advance his cause!

DIXON HESTLE, Chairman.

## ON STATE OF RELIGION. (I.)

Your committee beg leave to report religion in principle is the love of God shed abroad by the power of the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us, and is to the believer the light of life in exact proportion to the capacity to receive, and the faith which is the operation of God which works by love and purifies the heart. The Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, and this power to save is progressive in a believing soul, adding faith, virtue and all the graces of the Holy Spirit as lively stones, and build up a spiritual house to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Christ said while on earth that it was needful for you that I go away; but if I depart hence, the Father will send in my name the comforter which is the Holy Ghost that he may abide with you (the church) ever. This precious promise was fulfilled to the present time, the Spirit of God has been in his churches even through all dark ages of the world; for the gates of hell could not prevail against the elect of God through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. We find, from the annual letters of the several churches to the association, that the Holy Ghost continues in his churches, for the churches have been kept by the power of God in fellowship of the Spirit and brotherly love. We also find that it has been a year of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, for some of the churches have not only been greatly strengthened in the graces of the Holy Spirit, but has, comparatively speaking, received large accessions to their numbers by experience and Baptism. All of which is respectfully submitted

Z. WILLIAMS, Chairman.

TREASURER'S REPORT. (K.)

A. J. Robinson, Treasurer, in account with the Bethlehem Association:

Dr.		Cr.
To amount received		
for minutes ....	\$86 75	amount paid Clerk \$86 75
Sabbath collection	28 4)	By amount paid A.
From Brother Burt	3 00	Jay, for the State
For Home Mission ..	33 65	Convention .... 65 05
	\$151 80.	\$151 80.

Respectfully submitted,

A. J. ROBINSON, Treasurer.

Sent by Jacob Smith  
Brewster Ala N.H.

The Grand son of  
Jacob Smith. who was  
factor in this country  
in 1869

## ORDER OF BUSINESS.

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First.—The Moderator and Clerk hold their offices from the election (of those officers) at one session until the election at the next session, whose duty it is to occupy their offices at the coming together of the next Association, and proceed regularly to the organization.

Second.—The Moderator to call the Association to order; or if absent, by motion, the vacancy of the Moderator or Clerk may be filled temporarily, by any brother present.

Third.—Singing and prayer at the opening of each day's session.

Fourth.—Delegates to come forward with letters or evidence of election, enroll their names; letters read and statistical matter noted by the Clerk.

Fifth.—The Association proceed to organization by electing Moderator, Clerk, and Treasurer, and the newly elected to take their seats.

Sixth.—Preaching Committee appointed.

Seventh.—Visiting brethren from other Associations, not delegated, invited to seats, only upon the voice of a majority of the body.

Eighth.—Delegates from newly constituted Churches present evidences or petitionary letters to be acted on; statistical matter noted; the name of the Church entered upon the calander; the hand of fellowship extended by the Moderator on behalf of the Association, the delegates to enroll their names, being entitled then, to all the privileges of any member of the body.

Ninth.—Call for correspondence; Clerk to note whatever response, either messenger, minutes, letters, or all.

Tenth.—Visiting brethren only share in suggesting and discussing questions; not privileged to vote, second any motions, or introduce matter.

Eleventh.—Any amendment to the Constitution, Rules of Order, or Decorum, to be offered during the session, must be stated or read on the first day of the session.

Twelfth.—The appointment of Standing Committees announced at the convenience of the Moderator.

Thirteenth.—Committee on Preaching to report at pleasure, to meet the exigency.

Fourteenth.—Before adjourning, announce services for the day following, thus closing the business for Saturday.

Fifteenth.—The minutes to be read and approved on the next morning of business, if not at the close of the day's session, unless ordered differently.

Sixteenth.—Report in order from Standing or Select Committees; and the committees can report at any time, when no motion is pending.

Seventeenth.—The Committee on Finance to receive funds forwarded to this Association from any source, by calling the names of the churches in their order, note object of contribution, and give due credit.

Eighteenth.—Resolutions in order now at any time, at the pleasure of the mover; no other business being under consideration.

Nineteenth.—Correspondence arranged and Messengers appointed, or elected.

Twentieth.—Report from Finance Committee, in order.

Twenty-first.—The Association to order the disbursement of the funds entrusted for Missions, &c.

Twenty-second.—Treasurer's report in order.

Twenty-third.—Elect the church with which to hold the next Association.

Twenty-fourth.—Elect for the preaching of the next Introductory Sermon, with Alternate.

Twenty-fifth.—Fix the salary of the Clerk; arrange for printing and distributing minutes.

Twenty-sixth.—Make pledges; adjourn to meet with the church elect; singing and prayer; Moderator and Clerk sign the minutes.

### NAMES OF MINISTERS.

A J Lambert, Mt. Pleasant.	C L Thornton, Brooklyn.
J McWilliams, Monroeville.	J F Cook, Brooklyn.
W O Morrow, Evergreen.	J L Bryers, Bluff Springs.
Andrew Jay, Evergreen.	E Cline, Bellville.
Z Williams, Brooklyn.	J Smith, Bellville.
P S Miller, Georgiana.	M Wood, Claiborne.
T Bennet, Garland.	W G Curry, Burnt Corn.
T Lang, Greenville.	G W Kierce, Milton, Fla.
Jos. Nelson, Baldwin Co.	John Beck, Pensacola, Fla.
	George Miller, Milton, Fla.